

Claims:

1. A collapsible ladder comprising:
a pair of opposing and substantially parallel rails;
5 a plurality of rungs being elongate and pivotally connected at or adjacent opposing ends to respective of the pair of rails whereby the ladder can be moved from an operational condition wherein the parallel rails are laterally separated from one another and disposed generally perpendicular to the rungs to permit access to the ladder, to a collapsed condition wherein the rails on movement relative to the rungs locate adjacent one another to prevent access to the ladder; and
10 locking means being operatively coupled to the pair of rails to prevent their separation in the collapsed condition, the locking means including a locking pin rigidly connected to one of the rails and a locking mechanism mounted to another of the rails and being operable to releasably engage the locking pin with the ladder in the collapsed condition.
2. A collapsible ladder as defined in claim 1 wherein the locking pin is at one end integrally connected to the rail and at or adjacent an opposite end has a hole configured to be engaged by a plunger of the locking mechanism.
- 20 3. A collapsible ladder as defined in claim 2 wherein, with the ladder in the collapsed condition, the locking pin is designed to pass through an opening in an underlying of the rungs together with an aperture in an opposing of the rails wherein the hole in the locking pin is exposed for engagement by the plunger.
4. A collapsible ladder as defined in any one of the preceding claims wherein the collapsible ladder at and adjacent its upper end is free of the ladder rungs for a height substantially greater than shoulder height of a person and providing unobstructed access between the pair of rails.
- 25 5. A collapsible ladder as defined in any one of the preceding claims further comprising anchoring means connected to one or both of the pair of rails and being adapted to permanently or temporarily mount the ladder to a structure.
- 30 6. A collapsible ladder as defined in claim 5 wherein the anchoring means includes a bracket connected at a lower end of one of the rails and adapted to fix to a lower part of the structure, and a locating member connected adjacent an upper

end of the one of the rails and adapted to anchor to an elevated part of the structure.

7. A collapsible ladder as defined in claim 6 wherein the bracket is pivotally coupled to the rail to permit variations in the pitch of the ladder, and the locating member includes a locating pin being adapted to removably locate in a corresponding recess in the structure.
- 5 8. A collapsible ladder as defined in any one of the preceding claims wherein the pivotal connection between the rungs and the rails is provided by a pivot pin coupled to the rail and each of the rungs.
- 10 9. A collapsible ladder as defined in any one of the preceding claims wherein the pair of rails are each fabricated of channel-section members having their respective flanges aligned with and directed toward one another, the rungs being configured to nest within the channel-section rails with the ladder in the collapsed condition.
- 15 10. A collapsible ladder in claim 9 wherein the rungs are also fabricated of channel-section members having a width dimension across opposing flanges of less than the corresponding internal width dimension of the rails.
11. A collapsible ladder as defined in any one of the preceding claims additionally comprising at least one handle connected to one of the rails and positioned such that the ladder in its collapsed condition is evenly weighted about said handle.
- 20 12. A collapsible ladder as defined in any one of the preceding claims wherein the collapsible ladder is fabricated from roll-formed steel.